

Testimony in support of HB-5419

Submitted by Marigrace Larke
To The Environment Committee
State Representative Linda Gentile and committee members.

My name is Marigrace Larke and I am from Hamden Ct. I am a member of the Open Space and Natural Resource Commission in Hamden and would like to submit testimony to the committee in support of preserving the Savin Farm in Lebanon. I am a member of the Connecticut Farmland Trust and have worked with the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association as a member of the Connecticut Woodcarvers Association.

As a member of the Open Space Commission in Hamden we try to help identify open space that could possibly be acquired for the Towns benefit. Our Commission is now working on trying to get an easement for a parcel that was a farm. In this capacity I attended a Workshop for Farming Protected Land in October of 2013. The Workshop was held at a Grange Hall in Woodstock Ct. After the talk there was a tour of Morse Family Farm. This farm was a dairy farm that produces milk for Cabot Creamery. The farm is run by two brothers and is a very modern operation with strict production rules. The fields that are used are strictly for food for the herd of cows that they have. One of the things he said was that they are always looking for land to grow more corn for silage for these animals. There were three of these Workshops given throughout the State last year. The Morse farm is protected by the Ct. State Department of Agriculture. The Rosedale farm in Simsbury is protected by the Simsbury Land Trust and Sunny Valley by the Nature Conservancy. You can refer to a booklet Conservation Options for Connecticut farmland put together by the Connecticut Farmland Trust and the American Farmland Trust. I also have a brochure about the State of Connecticut's Department of Agriculture's Farmland Preservation program that was given to me at the Workshop. I am enclosing a copy of this booklet in my packet.

I grew up with my Grandfathers farm on my street and the neighbors farm across the street. I lived in Hamden as I do now but these farms are long gone and a Grange Hall I haven't seen in many years. Hamden has one family farm left it is protected by the State of Connecticut. It is the Hindinger Family Farm. We continue to save as much farmland as we can because once it is gone for other reasons we have lost a very important resource to feed ourselves. The farming industry has seen an upsurge because of the farm to table movement. Generally it is healthier to know where your food is coming from. There is another farm in Hamden it is privately owned and not protected and feeds a lot of people right into the cold weather and will be sorely missed if its status is lost. I know it takes a lot of hard work but according to Kip Kolesinkas from the Workshop there are people looking for farmland and if there is farmland protected into perpetuity we will all benefit.

My father was a butcher and a supermarket owner and starting in the 1950s he was constantly talking about making sure the farms would be saved for without them we will lose our independence. Continue the increase in farming by protecting Lebanon's Savin Farm in perpetuity specifically for continued farming. Thank you.

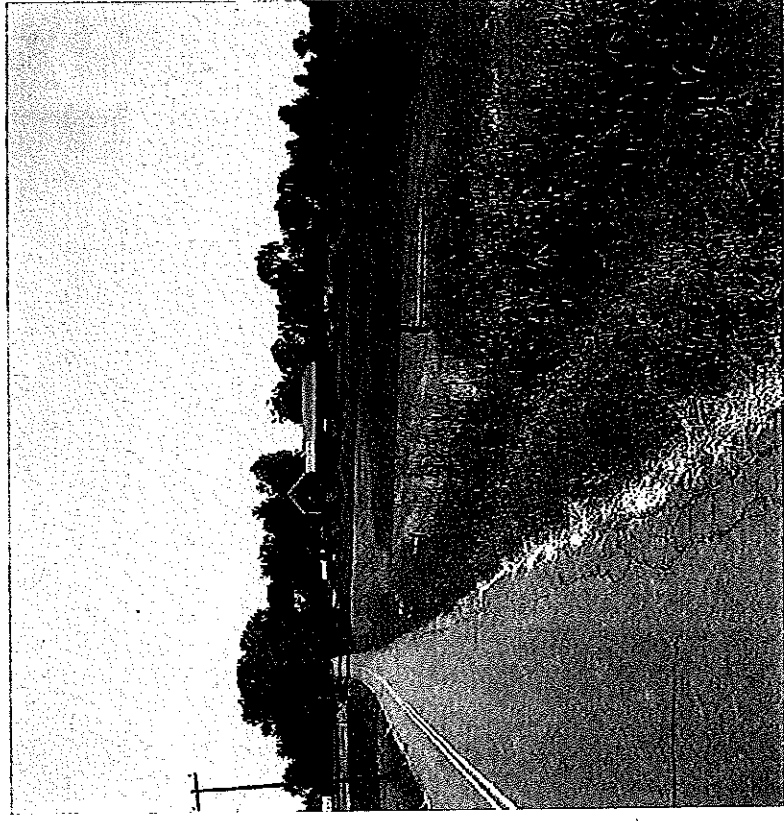
Marigrace Larke 155 Howard Drive Hamden Ct 06514

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES OF
THESE LANDS:

- * *DON'T* use your land for prohibited, commercial non-agricultural uses. If you have any questions about whether or not a use is permitted, please call us to discuss the matter at 860.713.2511.
- * *DON'T* divide or subdivide your restricted farmlands.
- * *DON'T* mine gravel from the restricted farmlands. [In some cases, gravel may be permitted for uses on the restricted farmlands with prior notice and approval of the Connecticut Commissioner of Agriculture.]
- * *DON'T* remove soils from the restricted farmlands.
- * *DON'T* decrease the productivity of arable land or convert/degrade prime and statewide important soils on the restricted farmlands.
- * *DON'T* allow lease of a residence on restricted farmlands to persons not incidental to the farm operation.
- * *DON'T* sell the land prior to notifying the Connecticut Commissioner of Agriculture 90 days in advance.
- * *DON'T* clear the land without using best management practices in accordance with an approved farm resource or forestry management plan.

Date of publication: March 2011

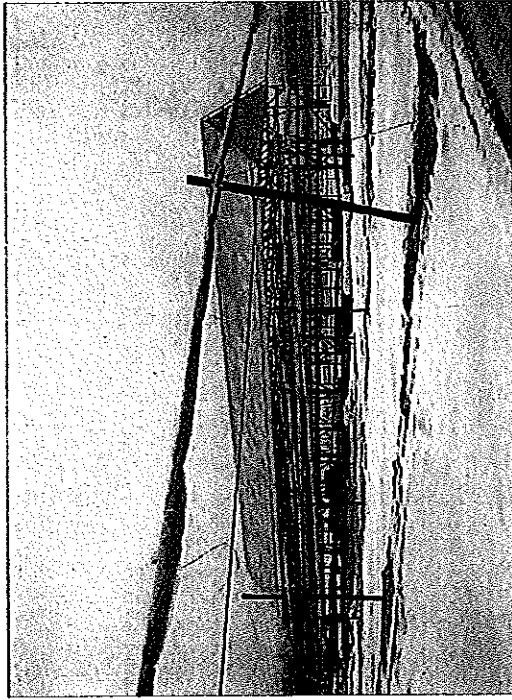
State of Connecticut
Department of Agriculture's
Farmland Preservation
Program



Coulter Farm, Suffield (113 acres)

"DO's and DON'Ts" Brochure

ACTIVITIES PERMITTED ON RESTRICTED FARMLANDS WITH APPROVALS:



Thrall Farm, Ellington (171 acres)

Prior approval of the Connecticut Commissioner of Agriculture is needed for the following:

- ☐☐☐ Local permits to build, replace or expand structures
- ☐☐☐ Digging or expanding a pond or drainage
- ☐☐☐ On-site gravel to improve farm roads or farm structure foundations
- ☐☐☐ Revised/updated conservation plans
- ☐☐☐ Lease of farm and/or structures – use, terms, duration

Please notify the Commissioner within 90 days prior to sale or transfer of ownership of agricultural lands.

THIS 'DOS' AND 'DON'TS' BROCHURE IS...

Intended for owners of lands preserved through the *State's Farmland Preservation Program* as a guide to what can and can't be done on the State's preserved farmlands.

- ✓ *DO* use the land for agricultural purposes and maintain the agricultural utility of the land.
- ✓ *DO* contact us should you have any questions about uses of your preserved farmland or specific questions regarding the Program or the deed of conveyance. Our number is 860.713.2511.
- ✓ *DO* provide us with a copy of your Soil Conservation Plan. These plans are provided by the County USDA-NRCS offices, free of charge. Please provide copies of any resource or waste management plans, or agricultural leases.
- ✓ *DO* call us about questions related to your deed covenant. Deeds vary and they may or may not provide for a residence, agricultural structures or other improvements or modifications.
- ✓ *DO* obtain prior approval of the Commissioner of Agriculture prior to obtaining any local building permit, and prior to any construction or site activity. The prior approval is required under C.G.S. 47-42d.

PLEASE CALL US AT 860.713.2511 WITH ANY STRUCTURE OR LAND USE QUESTIONS. IT'S IN EVERYONE'S BEST INTEREST.